

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 AGR-05 AGRE-00 AF-08 ARA-06

EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 OIC-02 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00

FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

SP-02 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 NSC-05 SS-15

STR-04 CEA-01 IGA-02 L-03 /136 W

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R 240822Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBSSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 666

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E O 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, OTRA, RP

SUBJ: THIRD MEETING OF CONSULTATIVE GROUP FOR FOOD PRODUCTION AND
INVESTMENT (CGFPI), MANILA, SEPT 22 TO 24, 1976

1. SUMMARY. THE THIRD MEETING OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP ON FOOD PRODUCTION AND INVESTMENT (CGFPI) CONCLUDED WITH UNANIMOUS AGREEMENT TO FOCUS DURING THE YEAR AHEAD ON THE FOOD PLAN EXERCISE. IT WAS FURTHER AGREED THAT THE LONGER-TERM VIABILITY OF THE GROUP WOULD DEPEND HEAVILY UPON PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN THIS PILOT EXERCISE. WHILE THE SECRETARIAT WAS ALSO AUTHORIZED TO CONTINUE WITH CERTAIN OTHER PROGRAMS, THESE WILL NOT BE CENTRAL TO THE ULTIMATE DECISION ABOUT THE GROUP'S FUTURE. THE COMPROMISE BETWEEN THE SECRETARIAT AND THE SPONSORS ARRANGED BEFORE THE MEETING WAS THUS RATIFIED BY THE MEMBERS PRESENT. SEVERAL OF THE LDC REPRESENTATIVES WERE NOT PRESENT NOR WAS SAUDI ARABIA. A REPRESENTATIVE FROM THE ARAB FUND FOR SOCIAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ATTENDED FOR THE FIRST TIME. END SUMMARY.

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2. A NOTEWORTHY FEATURE OF THE MEETING WAS THE COMPLETE

ABSENCE OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN DC AND LDC AT THE MEETING. THE REASONS FOR THIS WELCOME DEVELOPMENT (WHICH WAS IN THE PATTERN OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS BUT NOT SPACE WITH THE BROADER NORTH-SOUTH AMBIENCE) ARE VARIOUS BUT FOREMOST AMONG THEM IS THE FACT THAT THE DC DONOR MEMBERS HELD NEARLY IDENTICAL (IF UNCOORDINATED) POSITIONS AND EARLY DOMINATED THE DISCUSSIONS. THIS WAS POSSIBLE BECAUSE ALL AGENDA ITEMS WERE REALLY ONLY VARIATIONS ON THE THEME OF THE FUTURE AND FOCUS OF THE GROUP. GIVEN THE FACT THAT THE DONOR MEMBERS ALL EXPRESSED STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE FOOD PLAN FOCUS AND INDICATED THAT THEY WOULD CONSIDER UTILIZING THE RESULTS OF SUCH EXERCISES IN THEIR ASSISTANCE PROGRAMMING, A FORWARD MOTION WAS STARTED THAT COULD NOT BE CHALLENGED. SOME LDC MEMBERS DID EXPRESS FEAR THAT THE EXERCISE MIGHT DELAY THE FLOW OF ASSISTANCE AND URGED THAT THE GROUP IDENTIFY PROJECTS SUITABLE FOR RAPID IMPLEMENTATION; THEY COULD NOT, HOWEVER, ARGUE THAT FOOD PLANS ARE NOT AN APPROPRIATE VEHICLE TO RIDE IN PURSUIT OF THE GROUP'S MANDATE TO ACCELERATE THE FLOW OF ASSISTANCE FOR FOOD PRODUCTION AND ACHIEVE A MORE EFFECTIVE USE OF EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE. IN PART, THOSE LDC MEMBERS THAT MAY HAVE BEEN WARY OF THE IDEA WERE UNDERCUT BY THEIR COLLEAGUES HOPING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PILOT-PROJECT--SENEGAL, THE SUDAN AND BANGLADESH. (THE SECRETARIAT ANNOUNCED THAT INDIA AND HONDURAS, WHO WERE NOT AT THE MEETING, MIGHT ALSO BE INCLUDED IN THE EXERCISE.)

3. THROUGH A COINCIDENCE OF DC MEMBER AND SPONSOR VIEWS, THE FIRST STEP HAS THUS BEEN TAKEN TOWARD THE ULTIMATE U.S. OBJECTIVE OF UTILIZING THE CGFPI TO GAIN ACCEPTANCE OF THE PRINCIPLE THAT AN INCREASED FLOW OF ASSISTANCE RESOURCES BE TIGHTLY LINKED TO MORE EFFECTIVE AND WIDE RANGING SELF-HELP EFFORTS ON THE PART OF RECIPIENT COUNTRIES. THE NEXT STEP IS CLEARLY THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CGFPI SECRETARIAT. IT MUST WORK WITH THE PILOT COUNTRIES IN THE PREPARATION OF MEANINGFUL FOOD PLANS. HOPEFULLY, SUCH PLANS WILL NOT ONLY IDENTIFY PROJECTS SUITABLE FOR ASSISTANCE FINANCING BUT ALSO COMMIT THE PARTICIPATING GOVERNMENTS TO NEEDED POLICY CHANGES. THE SECRETARIAT THUS HAS ASSUMED A TASK THAT ONLY IN A SMALL MEASURE IS WITHIN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ITS CONTROL. WHILE ALL OF THE PILOT PLANS NEED NOT BE COMPLETED WITHIN THE YEAR AHEAD, PROGRESS MUST BE EVIDENT. IN THIS REGARD IT SHOULD BE NOTED THE TEST OF "PROGRESS" WILL BE RIGIDLY APPLIED; THE SPONSORS, ALTHOUGH COOPERATING IN THE PILOT EFFORT, ARE CLEARLY SKEPTICAL.

4. ASSUMING THAT THE FIRST HURDLE IS PASSED SUCCESSFULLY, THE SUBSEQUENT STEP WILL CLEARLY BE UP TO THE U.S. AND THE

OTHER DONOR MEMBERS. TO REPEAT, THE DONORS HAVE DECLARED THEIR WILLINGNESS TO UTILIZE SOUNDLY CONCEIVED FOOD PLANS IN PROGRAMMING THEIR ASSISTANCE. IF THEY DO NOT ACT IN GOOD FAITH, A CONFRONTATION WILL LIKELY ENSUE THAT WILL FURTHER SOUR NORTH-SOUTH RELATIONS. FOR THIS REASON, IT WOULD BE WISE FOR AID IN THE YEAR AHEAD TO FOLLOW CLOSELY THE SECRETARIAT'S WORK WITH THE PILOT FOOD PLANS IN ORDER TO DETERMINE WHICH ARE CONSISTENT WITH THIS OWN PROGRAM INTENTIONS AND THEREBY PREPARE ITSELF FOR A PROMPT AND POSITIVE RESPONSE, IF THAT IS CALLED FOR.

5. THROUGHOUT THE MEETING THE U.S. DELEGATION ADOPTED A SUPPORTIVE BUT NOT LEADING STANCE. WHILE THE OUTCOME THUS IS CONSISTENT WITH OUR GOALS, IT IS NOT EVIDENTLY THE RESULT OF OUR INVOLVEMENT.

6. THERE FOLLOWS A SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF DISCUSSION ON EACH AGENDA ITEM. ITEM 1, THE AGENDA - APPROVED WITHOUT DISCUSSION. ITEM 2A, IDENTIFICATION OF COUNTRIES WITH POTENTIAL FOR RAPID EXPANSION OF FOOD PRODUCTION- THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE CONFUSION AMONG THE DELEGATES AS TO THE MERITS, SHAPE AND ULTIMATE USE OF SUCH A STUDY. DEBATE WAS RESOLVED THE LAST DAY ONLY BY THE INTERVENTION

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OF THE SPONSORS WHO URGED THAT THE SECRETARIAT CONFINE ITSELF IN LARGE PART TO AN ASSESSMENT OF WORK NOW BEING DONE IN THIS FIELD BY OTHER BODIES. ALTHOUGH THE CHAIRMAN ACCEPTED THIS RECOMMENDATION, HE LEFT THE IMPRESSION THAT CGFPI WAS FREE TO IDENTIFY SITUATIONS WHEN RAPID PROGRESS COULD BE OBTAINED WITH LIMITED EFFORTS, IF SUCH IDENTIFICATION WAS SOUNDLY BASED.

7. AGENDA ITEM 2B, NATIONAL FOOD PLANS - AS IMPLIED ABOVE, DISCUSSION OF THIS ITEM WAS DOMINATE BY THE DONOR MEMBERS WHO STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE CONCEPT. RECIPIENT MEMBER CONCERNS WERE ASSUAGED BY ASSUANCES FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND THE SPONSORS THAT IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS NOW READY WOULD NOT BE DELAYED UNTIL THE COMPLETION OF FOOD PLANS. THE DIFFICULTIES OF PREPARING FOOD PLANS WERE FULLY DISCUSSED. IT WAS AGREED THAT THE PLANS SHOULD GENERALLY AVOID MACRO ECONOMIC COMPLEXITIES UNSUITED TO AN LDC ENVIRONMENT. THE DECISION AS TO HOW TO RELATE COMPLETED PLANS TO DONOR PROGRAMS WAS DEFERRED. THE U.S. TOGETHER WITH OTHER DONOR GOVERNMENTS, INDICATED A WILLINGNESS TO CONSIDER REQUESTS FOR TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

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IN PREPARING FOOD PLANS BY THE COUNTRIES INVOLVED.

8. AGENDA ITEM 2C, ESTIMATING LDC INVESTMENT REQUIREMENTS TO MEET THEIR FOOD GAP - THE PROPOSAL WAS REDUCED FROM A GLOBAL LEVEL TO A COUNTRY LEVEL BY THE REPRESENTATIVE OF FOOD POLICY INSTITUTE (WHICH ENTITY THE SECRETARIAT WOULD CONTRACT TO MAKE THIS STUDY). ALL DONOR MEMBERS STRONGLY SUPPORTED THE PRACTICALITY OF THIS REVISION OF SCOPE. AT THE INSISTENCE OF THE WORLD BANK REPRESENTATIVE, HOWEVER, THE CHAIRMAN PROPOSED TO STUDY MAJOR FOOD DEFICIT COUNTRIES INDIVIDUALLY AND TO AGGREGATE THE SMALLER COUNTRIES. THE WORLD BANK REPRESENTATIVE FEARED DELAY IF EACH AND EVERY COUNTRY IS STUDIED SEPARATELY. THE DONOR MEMBERS ACCEPTED THIS COMPROMISE WITH THE PROVISO THAT THE SECRETARIAT NOT BECOME BOGGED DOWN IN THE EXERCISE.

9. AGENDA ITEM 2D, THE FUTURE OF CGFPI - AS INDICATED, THE OUTCOME OF DISCUSSION ON THE ISSUE AS FORMALLY PRESENTED WAS PREDETERMINED SINCE ALL OF THE PRECEDING DEBATE HAD OCCURRED AGAINST THE BACKDROP OF THIS MAJOR QUESTION. ALTHOUGH THE LDC DELEGATIONS WERE UNENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE ONE YEAR TIME LIMIT, THE SPONSORS AND DONOR MEMBERS (WITH THE EXCEPTION ONLY OF NORWAY) WERE FIRM IN PLACING THE GROUP ON A PILOT PROJECT STATUS WITHIN A LIMITED TIME FRAME. LOOKING TO THE FIRMNESS OF THIS DECISION, THE

CHAIRMAN POINTED OUT THAT IT WILL BE UP TO THE DELEGATES TO INSURE THAT THEIR GOVERNMENTS DO NOT ADOPT CONTRARY POSITIONS IN RELATED FORA, ESPECIALLY IN THE WORLD FOOD COUNCIL.

10. AGENDA ITEM 3, TIME AND PLACE OF THE NEXT MEETING - OVER THE OBJECTIONS OF THE MEXICAN DELEGATE (WHO PREFERRED ROME) AND THE SPONSORS (WHO WANTED NO MEETINGS FOR AT LEAST A YEAR), IT WAS DECIDED TO MEET IN WASHINGTON IN LATE APRIL OR EARLY MAY 1977, PROVIDED THERE HAS BEEN ENOUGH PROGRESS BY THE SECRETARIAT TO ENABLE THEM TO PUT TOGETHER A MEANINGFUL SUBSTANTIVE PROGRAM. THE CHAIRMAN RESERVED THE RIGHT NOT TO CALL FOR A MEETING IN APRIL UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES.

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